

A lucky escape for a vine weevil (Col.: Curculionidae)

On 8 August 2002, whilst looking around a friend's garden in Forest Hill Road, East Dulwich (OS grid reference TQ 348744), I saw an unusual-looking weevil crawling across the path. It was an *Otiorhynchus*, but its white elytra made it unlike any British species I had ever seen. Closer examination showed that it seemed to be a specimen of the Vine weevil *Otiorhynchus sulcatus* (Linnaeus) with its elytra almost entirely white. The mystery was solved under a lens – it was a vine weevil that had been wrapped in spider silk. The weevil's hind legs and elytra had been completely trussed up, but its other four legs were free and it was using these to crawl in an ungainly fashion across the path. There was no sign of a spider's web in the immediate vicinity although there were plenty of orb webs throughout the garden. It is fascinating to speculate that having been captured in a web and wrapped in the spider's flocculent wrapping silk, the weevil had proved too tough for the spider to bite and had made its laborious escape. — RICHARD A. JONES, 135 Friern Road, East Dulwich, London SE22 0AZ (E-mail: bugmanjones@hotmail.com).



Figure 1. A vine weevil *Otiorhynchus sulcatus* wrapped with spider silk.